

Dynamic Analyses of the Mortar Dragster Tab Mechanism

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Dynamic Analyses of the Motar Dragster Tab Mechanism

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Abstract

As a means of verifying the design and operation of the Mortar Dragster, a commercially available, three-dimensional rigid body dynamics simulation program was exercised. The Mortar Dragster is a conceptual design for a range correction device for the 81-mm mortar. The design includes a series of drag surfaces, or tabs, which are actuated at some point in the trajectory of the projectile. The actuation places the entire series of drag surfaces into the airstream, thus slowing the projectile. Of specific interest are the collision forces and resulting tab hinge loads imparted by the opening tabs impacting the adjacent connected body because of integral torsion springs and air drag-induced torque loads. Collision forces predicted by the simulation program were of the same order of magnitude as hand calculations. The results of this investigation provided confidence in the final design of the tab mechanism before its flight testing and also provided further verification of the simulation program's performance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This work is in support of the Light Forces mission program at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL). Mortar Dragster is a concept that will provide a flight control module for existing mortar projectiles in an effort to reduce munition range error. The concept entails a simple inertial measurement unit (IMU) encapsulated in a small drag control device. The device will be small enough so that the infantry soldier's extra carrying burden will be minimal. The soldier can use the device in the field by merely screwing it onto the mortar body where the fuze is normally placed. The fuze then screws onto the other end of the drag module body. The drag device will be given the firing and target coordinates before launch. The soldier will then fire the mortar at a point past the target. Once in flight, the on-board IMU will determine the range error to the target and will deploy the drag device at the proper time. Thus, the mortar decelerates and impacts the target. The purpose of this concept is to provide the Army Light Forces with more effective firepower with only a miniscule increase in logistic burden.

During flight, the actuation and rotation of each tab are initiated by the unloading of the torsion spring. As a tab rotates outward from the drag module body and into the airstream, the projected frontal area of the tab is increased. The combination of the spring load and drag increases the torque about the pivot axis of the tab. Momentum of the tab is at a maximum at the "full open" position just before impact with the [connected] body. This collision force required to decelerate the rotating tab to a stop position is the subject of this report. It is important to accurately know this value while designing the tab mechanism in order to prevent failure during the flight test.

A picture of the mortar dragster device (in both closed, i.e., launch configuration, and open, i.e., deployed configuration) is shown in Figure 1. This report focuses on and briefly discusses the hand calculations and kinematic analysis that have led to the design and validation of the tab mechanism.

2. HAND CALCULATIONS

In an effort to design the dragster device and verify the simulation program, a simple hand calculation was performed. The calculation required the fundamental equations of dynamics specifically for rigid body motion about a fixed axis. This approach is simple and conservative.

These equations were used to determine the angular velocity of the tab before the tab impacts a stop (drag module body) which ends the pivot cycle. At that point, the angular deceleration of the tab is calculated by dividing the angular velocity by the impact duration. The duration of impact is uncertain; however, a time of 0.5 millisecond was chosen because it is of the order of impact duration seen on an in-house shock table. With the impact angular deceleration determined, the torque and resulting forces attributable to impact can be determined.

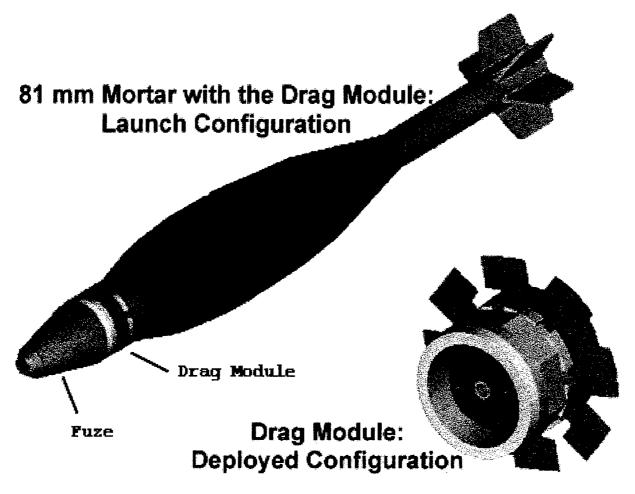


Figure 1. Mortar Dragster Device.

Figure 2 displays a force diagram that indicates the forces and torques attributable to the aerodynamic load and the torsion spring. A summation of the moments about the pivot point yields the equation

$$M_t = T_s + F_a r$$
.

in which

 M_t = Total moment before the end of the pivot cycle.

 T_s = Torque attributable to torsion spring, assumed to remain constant. The spring was rated at 0.0088 N-m (0.078 lb-in). This spring load was

estimated by multiplying the manufacturer's rating of 0.00111 lb-in/deg. by a 70° angle deflection.

- F_a = Aerodynamic load attributable to tab being fully deployed into the airstream. This drag force equates to 15.40 N (3.46 lb). This value was also held constant even though the load is at a maximum when the tab is fully deployed at a free flight velocity of 310 m/s.
- r = Arm radius from the center of gravity of the tab to the hinge point. This value measures 0.009 m (0.354 in.).

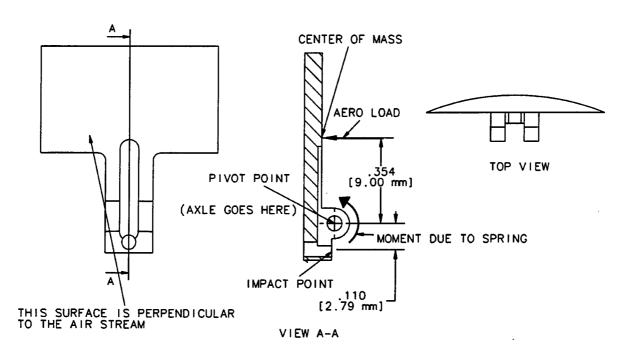


Figure 2. Force Diagram.

The total moment equates to 0.1473 N-m. The moment is equivalent to the total torque $T_t=I_0\alpha$.

in which

 I_0 = The moment of inertia of the tab about the pivot point (1.26x10⁻⁶ kg-m²).

 α = The angular acceleration of the tab before the end of the pivot cycle.

Solving for α , the angular acceleration is 1.169×10^5 rad/s². Using the α , the angular velocity before the end of the pivot cycle is found using the simple equation

$$\omega^2 = \omega_0^2 + 2\alpha(\Theta - \Theta_0)$$

in which

 ω = The angular velocity before the end of the pivot cycle.

 ω_0 = The initial angular velocity, which is 0.

 Θ - Θ_0 = The difference of final and initial pivot angles, which are $\pi/2$ and 0.

The resulting angular velocity is 606.0 rad/s. The time rate of change of the angular velocity will determine the angular deceleration. Dividing the angular velocity by 0.0005 second results in an angular deceleration of $1.212 \times 10^6 \text{ rad/s}^2$. This angular deceleration is then used to determine the impact torque on the tab. The equation of interest is

$$T_f = I_0 \alpha_f = Fr_s$$

in which

 T_f = The final or deceleration torque.

 $I_0\alpha_f$ = The moment of inertia of the tab about the pivot point (1.26x10⁻⁶ kg-m²) multiplied by the angular deceleration (1.212x10⁶ rad/s²).

 Fr_s = The impact force of the stop on the back end of the tab multiplied by the short radius arm of the impact point to the pivot point (0.0028 m).

The resulting force is 545.40 N or 122.56 lb. The resulting force is used to determine the shear stresses in the hinge portion of the tab. These stresses were determined to be well within the limits of the tab and axle material strengths. Based on these results and the conservative approach, the simulation results should reveal impact forces less than calculated.

3. KINEMATIC ANALYSIS

The kinematic analysis of the tab mechanism was performed using the commercially available program entitled Working Model® 3D version 3.0 (WM3D) by Knowledge Revolution. WM3D is a three-dimensional dynamics simulation program for desktop computers running the WindowsTM operating system [1].

A solid model (ACIS *.sat format file) of one of the tab mechanisms was created in AutoCAD® (computer-aided design) Release 14 and translated into a WM3D format file [2]. A shaded rendering of the WM3D model is shown in Figure 3. A revolute spring damper was created between the tab and connected body (a portion of the whole part design), allowing the tab to freely rotate through a 90° arc whose pivot axis of rotation is that of the axle. The spring constant value was input as specified by the manufacturer (0.00111 lb-in/deg, spring load linearly decreased as tab opened). The state-of-rest angle (i.e., natural angle) for this spring was input as 95° upon visual inspection. The connected body was anchored to the background. The axle geometry exists only as an aid in visually interpreting the model and positioning the tab and connected body with respect to one another. The tab's physical properties were calculated by the program, which required only material density and accurate geometric modeling from the user. Creation of the stop part shown in Figure 3 was required in order to acquire contact force information with respect to the tab collision; that is, contact force information could not be acquired between the tab and connected body once the

revolute joint was created between these two parts. (In terms of the actual hardware, the stop and connected body are one and the same.) The stop part was anchored to the background.

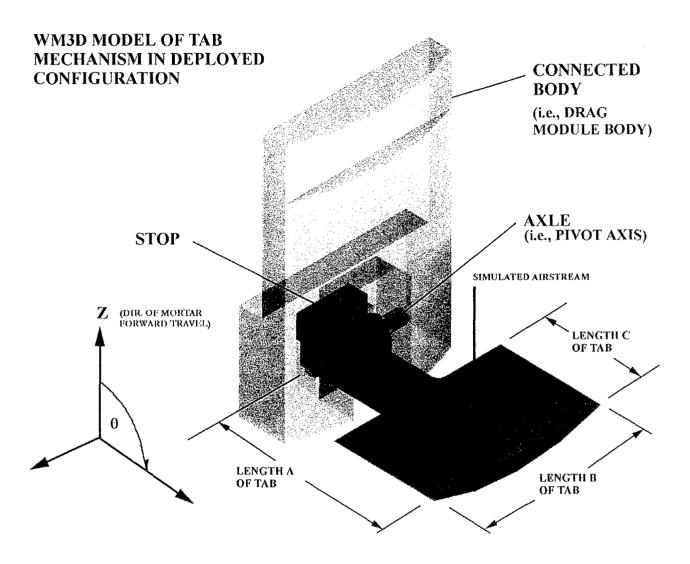


Figure 3. WM3D Model.

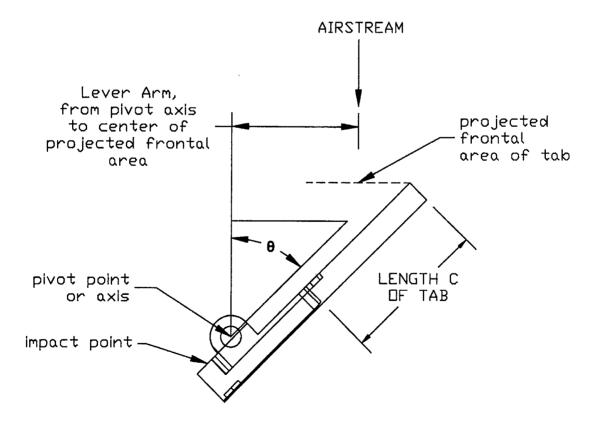
A number of initial runs of the model without the air drag loading were performed in order to validate and size the damping coefficient of the revolute spring damper. (Note, this damper value was not provided by the manufacturer.) A static actuation (i.e., module body resting on bench) of the tab mechanisms in the fully assembled fabricated prototype revealed an opening time (time for tab to rotate through 90° and contact stop part) of \leq 0.033 second as interpreted by 30 frames per second very high speed (VHS) video (i.e., the tabs opened in less than one frame of video). The most successful iteration of the WM3D model allowed for a tab opening time of 0.022 second with a damping coefficient value of $1e^{-5}$ lb.-in.-sec./deg. (solution time step of 0.00005 sec.)

The air-drag loading was input as an additional torque between the connected body and tab. A trigonometric relation was created to allow for an increasing drag load as the frontal area of the tab increased because it was rotated into a "simulated" airstream. The derivation of this relation is shown below (see Figures 3 and 4.)

```
Drag = .5\rho V^2 C_d S
Tab \ Drag \ Torque = Drag \ (\theta) \bullet Lever \ Arm \ (\theta)
Drag \ (\theta) = [.5\rho V^2 C_d S] \bullet sin \ (\theta) \bullet (1/386.22 \ in/s^2)
Lever \ Arm \ (\theta) = [sin \ (\theta) \bullet (length \ A \ of \ tab)] - [.5 \bullet sin \ (\theta) \bullet (length \ C \ of \ tab)]
Tab \ Drag \ Torque = 1.670 \ sin^2 \ \theta \ (in - lb)
[.189 sin^2\theta \ N-m]
```

in which

 $\rho = 4.3576e^{-5}$ lb/in³ (air at standard atmospheric conditions); V = 12,204.7 in/sec. (velocity of 310 m/s of mortar round at tab actuation); $C_d=1.28$ (for rectangular frontal area); S = 0.322 in² (length B of tab • length C of tab); length A of tab = 0.700 in., length B of tab = 0.735 in., and length C of tab = 0.438 in. The drag was equal to 15.5 N or 3.46 lb at 310 m/s in the deployed configuration [3].



SIDE VIEW OF TAB

Figure 4. Tab Diagram.

The combined spring damper and air drag loading torque case was run next. The WM3D automatic varying time step option was overridden by the user, and solutions were obtained for time step values of 0.0005 and 0.00005 seconds. The first time step value was chosen to match the hand calculations, while the second was chosen as a means of setting a lower bound for the solution if the actual impact duration between tab and stop were smaller. A "coefficient of restitution" value, which is used in WM3D's impulse-momentum collision model, was input as 0.5. This value is defined as the magnitude ratio of the relative velocities of the colliding bodies immediately before and after the collision. (Note, a coefficient of restitution value of 1.0 means that the collision is perfectly elastic.) Plots of predicted tab angular orientation, angular acceleration, and contact force versus time are shown in Figures 5 through 10. (Note, the contact force reported by WM3D is the collision impulse divided by the time step, "...because the exact duration of the collision, or the shape of the actual collision force profile, is rarely known even in physical experiments.") These predicted data show that for the solution time steps considered (0.0005 and 0.00005 seconds), the tab rotates 90° in approximately 6 msec, with maximum decelerations of 9.61x10⁷ to 2.2x10⁹ deg./s² and maximum contact forces of 12 to 47 lb, respectively. Understandably, additional runs using higher values of coefficient of restitution and smaller time step values would most likely increase contact force prediction. However, because of time and funding constraints, these scenarios were not explored.

4. CONCLUSION

The combination of dynamic and kinematic analyses has provided confidence in the mortar dragster. Based on the results, the tabs should survive the loading attributable to the deployment into the airstream with a free stream velocity of 310 m/s (1017 ft/s).

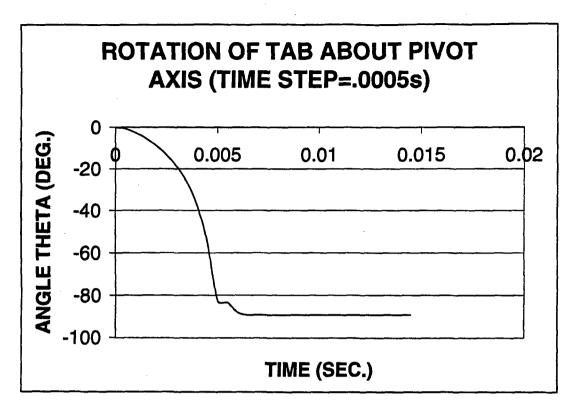


Figure 5. Predicted Rotation of Tab at Time Step of 0.0005 Second.

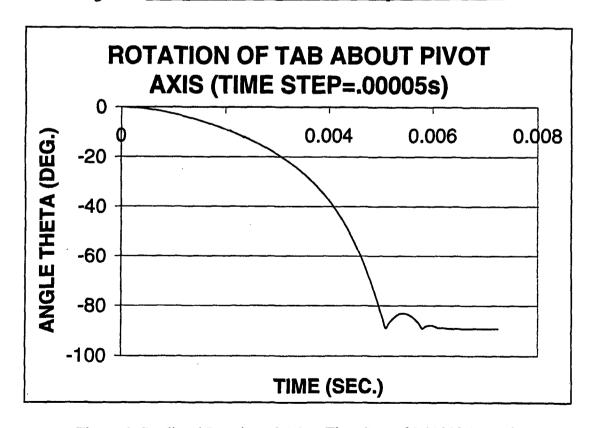


Figure 6. Predicted Rotation of Tab at Time Step of 0.00005 Second.

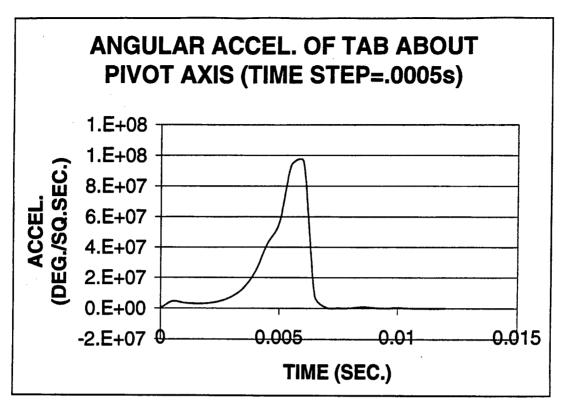


Figure 7. Predicted Angular Acceleration at Time Step of 0.0005 Second.

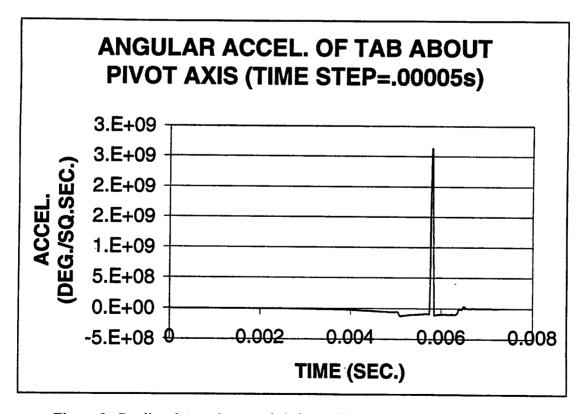


Figure 8. Predicted Angular Acceleration at Time Step of 0.00005 Second.

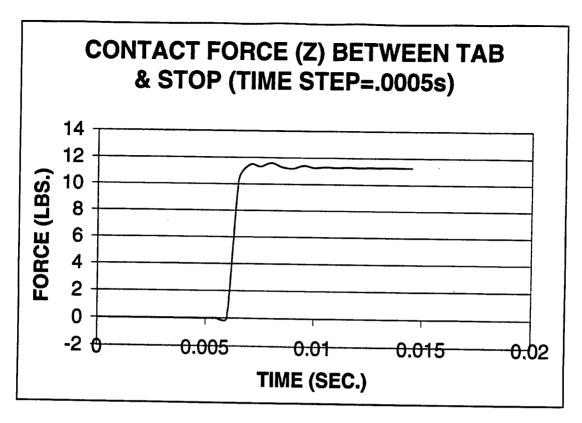


Figure 9. Predicted Contact Force at Time Step of 0.0005 Second.

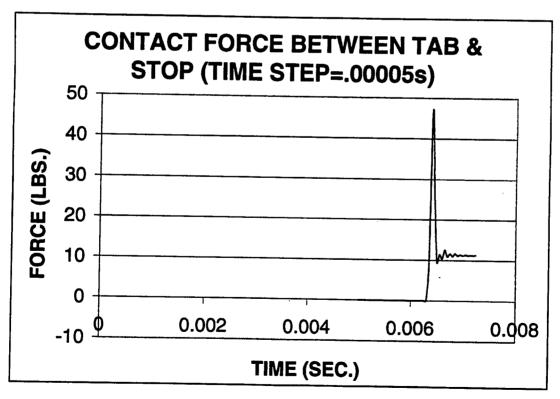


Figure 10. Predicted Contact Force at Time Step of 0.00005 Second.

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